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Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

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Tuesday, 19 December 2000, 11.35 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Mali	Mr. Toure
	Namibia	Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi
	Netherlands	Mr. Scheffers
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2000/1196).

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00-80466 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2000/1196)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Yugoslavia in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia, Mr. Goran Svilanovic.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Svilanovic (Yugoslavia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, document S/2000/1196.

The Security Council will now hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I give him the floor.

Mr. Annabi: As you have just indicated, Mr. President, Council members have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), dated 15 December, which provides a comprehensive account of developments in Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, over the past few months.

The most important development during these past three months has been the holding of municipal elections, in which almost 80 per cent of the eligible electorate participated. As Council members are aware, Kosovo Serbs did not, however, participate in the elections, and the voter turnout for Romas and Turks was low to negligible. Other minority participation was more encouraging, especially among the Kosovo Bosniac and Gorani communities.

The election results have been certified by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Kouchner, in 27 out of Kosovo's 30 municipalities. Of those 27 municipalities, the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) won in 21 municipalities, and the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) won in six other municipalities. The exceptions, where certification has not been possible, are the three Kosovo Serb majority municipalities of Leposavic, Zubin Potok and Zvecan. In these areas, the Special Representative has appointed municipal assemblies. Kosovo Serb representatives have been drawn from various political parties, but they also include a number of independent personalities. Major progress has now been made in establishing functioning municipal assemblies.

The report of the Secretary-General notes that changes in the Government in Belgrade have influenced Kosovo's political life. While Kosovo Albanian leaders have welcomed the changes as a positive contribution, they have perceived President Kostunica's victory as a threat to their well-known aspirations for the province. That perception could, unfortunately, further radicalize some Kosovo Albanian nationalist elements and may place Kosovo's minorities under increased threat, which UNMIK, in cooperation with the Kosovo Force (KFOR), has taken steps to address.

UNMIK places emphasis on combating politically motivated violence, and a joint UNMIK-KFOR Political Violence Task Force has been established. The pre-election period saw a significant drop in the level of politically motivated violence. However, in the post-election period, the number of attacks has, regrettably, returned to a level comparable to that of midsummer of this year.

One incident of particular concern to UNMIK was the bombing of the house of the senior representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in Kosovo, Ambassador Vukicevic, of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Committee for Cooperation with UNMIK, which resulted in the death of a Serb guard and the injury of three other persons. The following day, a senior politician of the LDK was also murdered.

The overriding human rights concern in Kosovo continues to be the provision of adequate security for Kosovo's minorities. While for some communities, such as the Kosovo Roma, the number of significant incidents has dropped, for others the situation remains precarious or has in fact deteriorated. For example, four Ashkalija returnees were murdered in the Mitrovica region in early November. UNMIK has continued to develop measures to improve security in minority communities, with joint patrols of UNMIK and the Kosovo Force and the establishment of a telephone hotline.

The Secretary-General has emphasized that extremists must not be allowed to undermine the achievements obtained so far in providing the basis for substantial autonomy and self-government in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). Continued implementation of substantial autonomy depends upon the existence of security and respect for human rights and democratic development. None of these conditions can be met unless Kosovo's leaders and the general population commit themselves to ensuring that they are upheld.

I would like to turn now to the situation in the Presevo Valley. In mid-November, there was an escalation of armed confrontation between Serbian security forces and the self-styled Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac in the ground safety zone adjacent to Kosovo. The clashes triggered an influx of almost 5,000 displaced persons from the area into Kosovo. While the number of displaced can be considered as relatively small, the potential implications for peace and security in the region are quite serious.

In response, KFOR and UNMIK continue to enhance operations within Kosovo to further deter and disrupt radical ethnic Albanian groups from conducting armed activities in the Presevo Valley. These operations combine both political and military efforts to reduce tensions within the ground safety zone. Elements of the operation include, among other measures, sustained political pressure on Kosovo Albanian politicians who might exert some moderating influence on hard-line Albanian armed groups; intensified reconnaissance operations along the eastern boundary of Kosovo; and extensive operations within Kosovo to deter any attempt to move arms or military equipment to the Presevo Valley.

UNMIK continues to make impressive gains in normalizing life in Kosovo. Health care institutions continue to be refurbished. Almost 70,000 children have been immunized against polio. More than 1,000 schools have been rehabilitated since last September. Work also continues to restore both the electricity and the water-supply systems in Kosovo. In the case of the water systems, 80 per cent of Kosovo's urban population now have chlorinated water. In comparison, only 30 per cent had access to chlorinated water in mid-1999, when UNMIK was established.

On the humanitarian front, it is estimated that some 20,000 families could be at risk of suffering severe exposure this winter if coal and firewood are not provided. Work is under way to provide winter stoves, blankets and other non-food items, such as coal and firewood. Places are also being made available in community shelters.

The UNMIK Mine Action Coordination Centre has estimated that the task of clearing Kosovo of mines and other ordinance should be completed by December 2001 and it has therefore prepared an exit strategy to transfer responsibilities to the appropriate departments of the Joint Interim Administrative Structure.

Before concluding, I would like to mention the incident which occurred last weekend in Leposavic in northern Kosovo. This was on the evening of 16 December, when two Kosovo Serbs died, two more were seriously injured and the Leposavic municipal police station was burned to the ground. The violence stemmed from an incident in which a Kosovo Serb was

arrested for drunken driving and the attempted murder of a Kosovo Serb officer of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS). A crowd subsequently formed at the Leposavic police station to demand the release of the arrested man. In the ensuing events, seven Belgian KFOR soldiers were taken hostage and later released. The crowd attempted to break into the police compound. Petrol bombs were thrown at the police station and three KFOR vehicles and one KPS police car were destroyed. Belgian KFOR members fired tear gas and warning shots in response.

As I just mentioned, two Kosovo Serbs died during this incident, one from a gunshot wound and the other, reportedly, from a heart attack. UNMIK police has launched an investigation into this incident and into the deaths. Since then, the situation in the region has remained calm, and this is confirmed by the latest situation reports we have received.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that, while many of the foundations for the future development of Kosovo have been laid, much remains to be done. The upsurge in politically motivated violence, as well as the incidents in the Presevo Valley and in Leposavic, underscore, if there is any need to do so, the fragility of the situation and the need for continued international support for UNMIK and its work. This support will be critical as the Mission continues to implement the results of the municipal elections held last October and as it increases the involvement of the local population in the local interim administrative bodies.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I call on the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Svilanovic (Yugoslavia): In addressing the Security Council for the first time, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency and to express my conviction that, under your able stewardship, it will continue to conduct its affairs fruitfully and constructively. I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing.

In taking up the issues at hand, let me recall that, in the past several weeks, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has addressed the Security Council on a number of occasions, drawing its attention to the serious situation in southern Serbia, specifically the ground safety zone, which includes parts of the territories of the Serbian municipalities of Bujanovac, Medveda and Presevo. The highest representatives and the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expect the international community to respond to the serious events in the zone, in accordance with the obligations to which it committed itself by Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Kumanovo Military-Technical Agreement, in order to protect and secure the administrative boundary of Kosovo and Metohija and to prevent armed Albanian terrorists from entering the zone, which is the main cause of the present tensions.

Since 10 June 1999, Albanian terrorists have committed more than 400 armed attacks on Yugoslav police personnel and residents of the zone, killing 19 people, 11 of them police officers and 8 civilians, and wounding 39 police officers and 3 civilians.

More than 1,000 terrorists from Kosovo and Metohija, often equipped with heavy weapons, have entered the zone and are still there. They present a potent threat to the lightly armed Yugoslav policemen, the only ones allowed by the military-technical agreement to police the zone. The safety and security of its population are under attack, and the major roads in southern Serbia are constantly threatened, while tens of thousands of Serbs living in Kosovo and Metohija close to the zone are cut off from the rest of Serbia.

The actions of Albanian terrorists further instigate the ethnic cleansing of the remaining Serbian and other non-Albanian population and constitute an enormous impediment to the return of internally displaced Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija. They also impede the efforts of the international community and the new democratic Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to normalize the situation in Kosovo and Metohija.

The new Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia bases its policy on constructive cooperation and dialogue with the international community. Consequently, it addresses the question of Kosovo and Metohija with immense responsibility and a firm commitment to full respect for Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the military-technical agreement. Faced with the escalation of violence in the zone and the fact that violence has become a daily occurrence in Kosovo and Metohija, the Yugoslav Government continues to be committed to dialogue and a quest for a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the

problem. Unfortunately, it is precisely this commitment of ours to peace, dialogue and tolerance that has been a cause of concern and anxiety to those who resort to force and violence in order to further their extremist goals. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia therefore expects the Security Council to take appropriate measures this time around to address the situation in a proper way.

The timing of these incidents is of particular concern. On the one hand, the fundamental democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have created the conditions for dialogue with the Albanian side and paved the way for all-round cooperation with UNMIK and KFOR, which we hope will lead to a generally acceptable political solution. On the other hand, the recent local elections in Kosovo and Metohija brought to the fore moderate forces among the Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. These developments made it incumbent on all of us to make sure that that positive momentum is not wasted. After all, no solution can be achieved without dialogue and negotiation, and the loss of the momentum may bring about a deterioration of the situation and lead to unforeseeable consequences. Such a course of events may not only aggravate the situation in Kosovo and Metohija; it may also jeopardize the democratic processes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and affect the stability of the region as a whole. The latest incidents in Leposavic are also a cause of added concern, and we hope and believe that they will not be repeated in the future.

It is of utmost importance now that Albanian terrorists pull out immediately from the ground safety zone and that the regime established by the military-technical agreement be fully respected. On behalf of my Government, I call on the Security Council to pledge its authority to bring about that end. KFOR and UNMIK should take effective measures to stop further incursions by Albanian terrorists from Kosovo and Metohija that could result in the spread of armed incidents. In these efforts, UNMIK and KFOR will enjoy full support and cooperation from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Let me point out that my Government stands ready to take all necessary measures, under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in accordance with the relevant international documents, to protect its citizens and defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. This is our duty, as well as our obligation.

Before I conclude, let me point out that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia welcomes the statements of the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the effect that KFOR and NATO will act vigorously to stop the violence of armed Albanian terrorists and that they will expand cooperation with the Yugoslav Army and police within the framework of the joint commission entrusted with the task of implementing the military-technical agreement. In that context, the Government of my country reiterates its readiness to sign at an early date an agreement on the status of UNMIK and KFOR, so that mutual cooperation can be enhanced.

The Government of my country is also ready to consider, in cooperation with UNMIK and KFOR, possible changes in the regime in the zone, as well as its scope, convinced that it would facilitate the normalization of the situation in the area. My Government is prepared to take all necessary measures to integrate the local Albanian population and help them participate actively and be represented in local and central authorities, as well as in other walks of life, in particular police work, health care and education.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I would like to thank Mr. Annabi for his informative briefing. I would also like to welcome Foreign Minister Svilanovic to the Security Council and thank him for his remarks as well. He raised a number of interesting points.

I would like to assure the Foreign Minister that the Council has very much heard the concerns of his Government about violence in the ground safety zone and in certain municipalities in southern Serbia. We, too, are extremely concerned and have condemned these acts of violence. Mr. Annabi has described some of the steps taken by the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), including immediate steps to cut off the material and political support for the armed ethnic Albanian extremist groups and to enhance KFOR's surveillance and monitoring of the border along the ground safety zone. KFOR has interdicted weapons and supplies and detained more than 30 individuals

suspected of being involved in illegal activities. In addition, Mr. Kouchner has signed new regulations that increase the authority of KFOR and UNMIK to expel or detain anyone suspected of aiding armed insurgents in the border area.

My Government has joined KFOR and UNMIK officials in urging the Kosovar Albanian leadership to use its influence with these groups to encourage them to cease all violent activity. In November Secretary of State Albright sent a letter to the leading Kosovar Albanian figures warning in the strongest terms against further violence in Presevo region. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Secretary-General Robertson also raised the issue with Kosovo's leadership when he recently visited the area.

We welcome the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government's expressed commitment to respect is obligations under the military-technical agreement and in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). There is no better sign of this commitment than the enhanced cooperation between UNMIK, KFOR and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities through the Joint Implementation Commission. In that connection, I note that at a 17 December meeting of the Joint Implementation Commission the Commander of KFOR briefed Federal Republic of Yugoslavia officials on what KFOR has done and is doing regarding the Presevo Valley. He also stressed that the use of force is not the solution. Clearly, the only lasting solution to the problem is a political one. In that respect, we urge all sides to continue to exercise restraint, and we welcome the beginning of a dialogue with local community leaders and the establishment of a joint commission under Deputy Prime Minister Covic to investigate the problem.

We recognize that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government has shown considerable restraint and responsibility in dealing with this problem, especially during a hard-fought political campaign in the run-up to elections on 23 December. Not everyone has acted so responsibly, and we would caution against exaggerated charges and calls for military action that have emanated from some on both sides of the Kosovo border.

In Kosovo itself, as the Secretary-General's report makes clear, elections have opened the door to continued progress on the political front. The municipal assemblies have been constituted. Minority representatives have been appointed. The Joint Interim Administrative Structure is operational. In the coming months, UNMIK should continue to press ahead with regulations that will further define the responsibilities of Kosovo's autonomous institutions. The United States supports Kosovo-wide elections in the spring of 2001, with the participation of all groups in Kosovo. Democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have helped encourage this participation and provide hope that a multi-ethnic, democratic Kosovo governed by the rule of law will prevail.

Continued progress on the issue of the Kosovo detainees will help promote reconciliation. We urge the Government in Belgrade to press ahead with the passage of an asylum law for the release of Kosovar political prisoners, and we call for a full accounting of the missing.

In closing, we would like to welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of former Danish Defence Minister Haekkerup as his new Special Representative in Kosovo. We would also like to wish Bernard Kouchner all the best, thank him for his tremendous efforts and applaud his significant success in implementing Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Mr. President, we welcome amongst us the presence of Mr. Svilanovic, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We believe his presence in the Council contributes to the involvement of the new Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Government in support of the Council's efforts to achieve an early resolution of outstanding problems in Kosovo.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Minister Svilanovic for his initiative in setting up a truth commission on the war crimes committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We also appreciate the briefing and update given by Assistant Secretary-General Annabi.

A number of important issues have been discussed in the report of the Secretary-General in document S/2000/1196. In today's meeting, I will focus on the following four points. First, the security situation. It is encouraging that the situation in Mitrovica, a hotbed of inter-ethnic tension for a long period, has considerably improved. There was also a noticeable drop in violence in Kosovo in the pre-election period, but the improvement has not been

sustained. We are concerned about the incidents in the Presevo Valley in mid-November which triggered an influx of almost 5,000 people. We are, however, encouraged by the commitment of the authorities in Belgrade to work towards the return of the displaced persons and by their commitment to adopt measures for reducing discrimination against ethnic Albanians through their integration in the local police and political structures.

Secondly, detained and missing persons. The Secretary-General's report says that there are still 800 detained outside Kosovo and about 3,500 are still missing. This is a very high number. Efforts aimed at solving the cases of missing persons, irrespective of their ethnic origin, should be intensified. We welcome the establishment, in October, of the Bureau for Detainees and Missing Persons. The fate of detainees is likely to improve with the passing of legislation in the Yugoslav Parliament, which we hope will pave the way for their release. We continue, however, to remain concerned that an unacceptably high number of persons are still missing from Kosovo. We would urge that initiatives be redoubled to determine the whereabouts of these unaccounted individuals.

Thirdly, the local government. Following the successful holding of municipal elections in October, it is now necessary to focus on the building of institutions for governance and administrative capacity at the municipal level. This should be accompanied by gradual transfer of authority to the municipalities. Training provided by the Institute for Civil Administration, which opened in Kosovo last September, will be helpful in this regard. All political parties and sectors of society should be prepared to extend assistance in discharging the responsibilities of the elected officials. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) also has the special responsibility in ensuring that the local population is progressively involved in the bodies of interim administration.

Finally, civil society. We support the continued efforts of UNMIK to create a favourable environment for non-governmental organizations, other civil society structures, and local women's organizations in Kosovo. The recent opening of the ninth non-governmental resource centre by the institution-building pillar of UNMIK is a further step forward. The full involvement of civil society is indispensable in lending effective support to the efforts of the local administration.

Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) generated a difficult and sometimes impossible set of tasks for the special representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo. We have seen over the years the determination and dexterity of Mr. Kouchner in handling those issues. The Security Council mission to Kosovo in April, which I had the honour to lead, saw at first hand the activities and initiatives of Mr. Kouchner with regard to the future in Kosovo.

His mission has been extremely challenging and came at the most difficult moment. With his leadership and statesman-like vision, he has done a laudable job in Kosovo. We congratulate him for his success and we wish him the best in his future endeavours.

Mr. Levitte (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, as well as Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, also associated countries, align themselves with this statement.

I should like first of all to warmly welcome the presence among of us of Mr. Svilanovic, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, who is representing his country today at the Security Council table.

In the case of Kosovo, I should remind the meeting that, for the European Union, the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) must be the be all and end all of international community action. At our meeting on 16 November, in the presence of the Secretary-General's special representative, I had occasion to mention the impressive achievements of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)in this area over the last year and a half. The holding of non-violent and remarkably well organized municipal elections in Kosovo on 28 October, with the help of the Kosovo Force and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, was a major feather in the cap for UNMIK.

Mr. Kouchner should be congratulated on his exceptional efforts in this regard. We would like to give him the most sincere congratulations of our 15 countries on the completion of his term of office. I should like to assure his successor, Mr. Hans

Haekkerup, here and now, of the European Union's full support.

Action to combat violence should remain a priority for the Secretary-General's new representative. The fact is that men and women in Kosovo continue to be killed because of their ethnic background or the moderate opinions voiced by them in political debates. Furthermore, in the Presevo Valley, extremist groups of Albanian origin have killed police officers of Serbian origin. They seek to maintain a state of instability by harassing the forces of law and order. The reaction of the Kosovo Force to this provocation has been to increase the number of control points and step up its patrols at the borders of the ground safety zone. These measures have led to the seizure of weapons and the arrest of dozens of suspects. The Kosovo Force is continuing to reinforce its presence in this sector and is also active in fighting crime country-wide, in conditions which are, at all times, difficult and sometimes at the cost of the lives of some of its members.

President Kostunica has called on the people to respect the laws and not to fall into the trap of extremists who seek to increase tension. The international community must throw all its weight into ensuring that this message is heard by the people. It must also make it absolutely clear to the agitators that they will be unable to rely on its tolerance and understanding.

The European Union therefore welcomes the presidential statement on which the Security Council has today agreed. This statement is a clear message of the international commitment to the fight against violence and the search for dialogue. Mr. Svilanovic, when he returns to Europe — in fact to Paris, where President Kostunica will visit, giving him an opportunity to receive the signs of friendship from France — will be able to confirm this fact to the highest Yugoslav authorities.

On 1 November, Mr. Svilanovic set out before the United Nations the principles which would be governing the action of the new Yugoslav authorities. He proclaimed his country's pledge to comply with the Charter, emphasizing in particular that the consolidation of democracy and reconciliation between the peoples of the region would be among the top priorities of President Kostunica and his Government. He also expressed the hope of a rapprochement between South-East Europe and the European Union.

Major steps have been accomplished to date. The new Yugoslav authorities have worked actively on the realization of this programme. Even though extremist nationalism continues to rear its head here and there, democracy has now become established in the region. Continuing intolerance, violence and ethnic hatreds are becoming increasingly a memento of the past.

The establishment at the regional level of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 December was one of the most long-awaited measures. After years of conflict and suspicion, this decision, which the European Union welcomes, will help to set the seal on reconciliation in the Balkans. Coming as it does less than a month after the Zagreb summit, which proclaimed the European orientation of all the countries in the region, it represents a very positive and encouraging development.

Mr. Minister, today, on behalf of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, you have signed the Rome Statute, which creates the International Criminal Court, thereby demonstrating the standing commitment of the new Yugoslav authorities to respect international humanitarian law and the fight against impunity.

Mr. Minister, the European Union wishes to assure the Yugoslav authorities, through you, of its support for their action in favour of stabilization, democratization and reconciliation in South-East Europe.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): We are very grateful for the useful briefing which the Assistant Secretary-General has given us this morning, and I would like to warmly welcome the presence here today of His Excellency Goran Svilanovic, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We have taken careful note of his remarks, and I agree that it is the task of all of us, in particular, to try to sustain a positive momentum in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

The substance of the United Kingdom position is well covered in the statement which Ambassador Levitte made in his capacity in the presidency of the European Union. I would like to echo the welcome expressed there and in earlier statements for the

appointment of Mr. Haekkerup as Special Representative and join others in thanking Mr. Bernard Kouchner extremely warmly for the tremendous job that he has done as Special Representative.

One or two additional points. The United Kingdom strongly condemns the attack on the joint United States/Russian Kosovo Force (KFOR) near the Kosovo-Serbian boundary a few days ago. KFOR will not be deterred from carrying out its mission by extremist attacks. Violence directed against representatives of the international community cannot be in the interests of the residents of the Presevo Valley region who want to live in peace. This violence must stop immediately.

We also condemn the violence in Leposavic on 16 December, and we call on the Serb residents of Kosovo to avoid being manipulated by extremists who do not have the real interests of the Serb community at heart. That incident in particular demonstrates that there is a long way to go with the challenge of normalizing the situation in Kosovo. All sides have to respect the law and exercise restraint in the run-up to the Serbian parliamentary elections on 23 December. The holding of those elections in Kosovo is without prejudice to the future status of Kosovo and must not be used as an excuse for agitation.

The elections to Kosovo-wide provisional democratic self-governing institutions, as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999), should be held when the right conditions are in place. The process of creating those conditions has to begin now, and we call on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to begin those preparations, including the registration of Serbs and other minorities.

Finally, I should like to welcome contact between the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and UNMIK on the issue of Kosovar Albanians detained in Serbia. We hope a decision on their release can be taken as soon as possible. This will be a valuable confidence-building measure. I urge Foreign Minister Svilanovic to do all he can to move forward this important step towards normalization.

The United Kingdom is pleased to have sponsored the presidential statement which we are about to adopt.

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset we would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report as well the briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi. We welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Goran Svilanovic, and welcome his statement.

After local elections in Kosovo, the situation remains grave. In particular, politically motivated acts of violence increased. We are deeply concerned by this. It is our view that if extremist elements and secessionist forces are not curbed the consequences will be very serious. We hope that UNMIK and KFOR will take very forceful measures, and we urge people in all walks of life in Kosovo, especially their leaders, to renounce the use of force and translate it into concrete action.

Recently, in southern Serbia, conflicts occurred in the ground safety zone bordering Kosovo, and they are escalating. This not only raises very serious humanitarian issues, but it will also present new threats to ethnic relations in Kosovo, thus affecting peace and stability in that region. This is something we are very worried about. We strongly condemn the provocative acts of extremism. We have taken note that KFOR has adopted some measures and we hope that it will take further measures to restrict the activities of the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac (UCPMB) to ensure that the safety zone is not used as a haven for attacks against Serbia.

The appropriate resolution of the question of Kosovo hinges on the understanding, support and cooperation given to Kosovo. We welcome the efforts of UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to engage in constructive dialogue on matters of common concern. Thus, Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) will be fully implemented.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the Secretary-General's report, as well as Mr. Annabi's briefing. We also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Goran Svilanovic.

Between 16 November last, when we had Mr. Bernard Kouchner with us, and now there have been some developments that deserve to be highlighted. The opportunity recently offered to relatives of Kosovar Albanians detained at Belgrade's main prison to be able to visit them is a decision we appreciate. We hope these visits will be continued and that they can be extended to other detention centres in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The decision of the Yugoslav

authorities to begin to transfer the detainees in Posarevec and Nis to upgraded detention centres is also worth noting. While we appreciate these measures, we believe that, for the sake of peaceful coexistence in Kosovo, it is important that the Belgrade Government try to provide a lasting solution to the problem by freeing the Kosovar Albanians detained in Serbia. This gesture would also allow the Belgrade Government to win the trust of the people of the province.

The decision to expand representation on the Kosovo Transitional Council, with the participation of political parties that won a minimum number of votes in the elections last October, as well as the first meeting held by the directors of the Joint Interim Administrative Structure, also deserve to be highlighted because they show that, despite the difficulties, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continues to carry out its mandate in a firm and sustainable manner.

While there have been these positive developments, we must also mention the deep concern caused by the escalation of violence in Kosovo following the elections. UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) must spare no efforts to detain and bring to justice all who attack the peace process in Kosovo. We should also bear in mind that an insecure climate is not the most propitious environment for stimulating private investment.

The situation in the Presevo Valley constitutes a grave threat to Kosovo and can become a regional destabilizing factor. All who are nourishing separatist ideas and who think they can achieve such goals through a false confrontation between the Belgrade Government and UNMIK and KFOR should be very clear about the fact that the international community, which celebrated the installation of a new Government in Belgrade, continues to give its full support to UNMIK and KFOR and that it will not tolerate the resurgence of terrorist activities.

Finally, we express our deepest gratitude to Mr. Bernard Kouchner for the great work he has done with so much energy and enthusiasm in particularly difficult circumstances. We wish his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, success in his new post, which he will assume in January 2001.

Mr. Scheffers (Netherlands): Like previous speakers, I would also like to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing and the Secretary-General for his report. Let me also state that my delegation has listened with great interest to the statement of the Yugoslav Foreign Minister. I fully associate myself with the statement just made by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union. However, since this will probably be the very last opportunity for my delegation to express its views on Kosovo as a non-permanent member of this Council, I would like to make some additional remarks. The Netherlands also wishes to welcome the appointment of Mr. Hans Haekkerup as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the head of the United Nations Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The Netherlands notes with appreciation the arrangements for the Serb parliamentary elections to be held on 23 December without the involvement of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in its organization, but with the Kosovo Force (KFOR) providing additional measures to ensure safety and security. It is the feeling of my delegation that the concerns of all parties are being adequately met in this way.

Like Mr. Annabi and other Security Council delegations, the Netherlands remains seriously concerned about the developments in the Presevo Valley. The perpetrators of the ongoing violence are playing with fire. This cannot be condoned and is strongly condemned by the Netherlands and also rightly so in the presidential statement we are about to adopt.

We fully support the measures taken by KFOR in this respect. At the same time, it is essential that the Kosovar Albanian leadership should call on the rank and file to exercise restraint and for the international community to continue to pressure them towards that end.

While tensions in the area prevail, it is of vital importance that all channels of communication be kept open and used to best effect. KFOR is keeping in constant touch with the Yugoslav Army and police and it is equally important for KFOR and UNMIK to be in touch with the Belgrade leadership. Good communications may prevent small incidents from escalating into events that are difficult to control.

Finally, the fate of the Kosovar Albanian political prisoners incarcerated in Serbia remains a matter of grave concern to the Netherlands, and it should remain high on the international agenda. The new Government

in Belgrade has announced new amnesty legislation, but in the meantime these prisoners are still being held hostage to a political resolution of the Kosovo question. Continuing pressure should be brought to bear on the Yugoslav authorities to release all political detainees.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation thanks Assistant Secretary-General Hedi Annabi for his briefing and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2000/1196). We are also pleased to welcome Foreign Minister Goran Svilanovic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and have taken careful note of his remarks.

My delegation notes that the key achievement of UNMIK during the reporting period was the holding of municipal elections on 28 October throughout Kosovo. With the municipal assemblies fully functioning since 11 November, we wish to acknowledge the efforts of UNMIK to ensure that all of Kosovo's communities are represented in these municipal structures. The appointment of minority representatives to elected assemblies is a welcome development, as are the efforts aimed at integrating Kosovo Serb appointees into these structures. This is a critical task for UNMIK, as it lays the foundations for a multi-ethnic society on which the future of Kosovo must be built. We join in urging local leaders across the political spectrum in Kosovo to support and participate in the daily business of government at the municipal level.

We encourage UNMIK to continue its work in reconfiguring the existing central bodies as part of its efforts to build local capacity for self-governance and note the work being undertaken to elaborate an interim framework that would define substantial autonomy. We believe, like UNMIK, that the process of defining substantial autonomy and of developing institutions of self-government, with the population of Kosovo sharing more and more responsibility in the administration of the province must, be actively pursued.

At this point I wish to focus on a few of the areas covered in the report of the Secretary-General, namely, the security situation, minority communities, detained and missing persons and the humanitarian situation.

My delegation is concerned that the post-election period has seen an increase in politically motivated attacks to a level comparable to that of mid-summer 2000. That is unacceptable. We therefore place emphasis on the work of the Political Violence Task Force and support its efforts in combating politically motivated violence. We agree with the assertion in the Secretary-General's report that words alone do not reverse this counter-productive behaviour, but only concrete actions by all communities in Kosovo, particularly their leaders, through which they must show that they do not accept such violent acts.

Of particular concern is the recent escalation of armed confrontation between the Serbian security forces and the so-called Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac in the ground safety zone, and the resulting influx of almost 5,000 displaced persons into Kosovo. We see the need for the presence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the area to help ease conditions and build confidence among the local population.

The conflict situation in the Presevo Valley must not be allowed to worsen further, as it could serve to destabilize the region, thereby posing a serious threat to the local population and to community relations. In this context, my delegation joins in condemning the killings that have taken place. We express our condolences to the bereaved. The presidential statement to be adopted fully reflects the views of my delegation.

We are also encouraged by the stated commitment of the Yugoslav authorities to work towards a peaceful settlement. At the same time, it is imperative that there should be increased surveillance of the border by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to put an end to extremist activities and to stop any traffic in illegal weapons. In that regard, we expect KFOR to report fully on any relevant violations to the committee established under resolution 1160 (1998).

As my delegation has emphasized in previous briefings, the future of Kosovo must encompass the peaceful coexistence of various ethnic groups, including minority communities. The fact is that adequate security still remains the key issue for Kosovo's minority communities. It is of concern to us that minority groups continue to be the target of threats, intimidation and violence. We urge UNMIK to continue to develop measures to improve the conditions in various minority communities across Kosovo through the implementation of special security

measures, including joint patrols by UNMIK police and KFOR. We have noted the establishment of a telephone hotline.

Another area of concern to us is that of violations of human rights. It is disturbing that in October 2000 alone some 25 cases of trafficking in women were discovered. It is clear that these are not isolated cases, but part of a larger problem that has to be dealt with in collaboration with all the countries in South-Eastern Europe.

We welcome the establishment on 21 November of the ombudsperson institution as one mechanism for ensuring respect for human rights. We note that there have been workshops and other activities, such as a public awareness campaign, carried out by UNMIK with the support of the Council of Europe.

The issue of detained and missing persons remains a high priority for my delegation. The Secretary-General's report indicates that over 3,470 cases of missing persons from Kosovo remain unresolved. The establishment of the Bureau for Detainees and Missing Persons is a step in the right direction. We also continue to attach importance to the work of the Special Envoy on Persons Deprived of Liberty, and support his work. This is another area in which cooperation between UNMIK and Yugoslav authorities will be critical to the reconciliation process.

In closing, I wish to offer by delegation's commendation to Mr. Bernard Kouchner. The words in paragraph 114 of the Secretary-General's report (S/2000/1196) aptly describe my delegation's views:

> "His imagination and inspiring leadership were instrumental in steering this most challenging and unique mission during its most difficult period."

We wish Mr. Kouchner well in his future endeavours. We also welcome his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, and assure him and the men and women of UNMIK of Jamaica's continued support as they carry out the challenging task of implementing the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999).

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation appreciates the convening of this meeting, which affords us another opportunity to review developments in Kosovo as well as the important work being carried out by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999).

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his useful briefing, and the Secretary-General for his latest report on the work of UNMIK and on the challenges that remain. We acknowledge the presence of the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and take note of the statement he has just made to the Council.

My delegation welcomes the appointment of Mr. Hans Haekkerup as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK. We extend our best wishes to Mr. Haekkerup on his appointment and new assignment. Given his leadership skills and experience, we have every confidence that he will lead UNMIK effectively and efficiently, building upon the successive achievements that the Mission has made thus far in implementing its mandate. As a contributor to the UNMIK police force and to some modest reconstruction efforts in Kosovo, Malaysia pledges its full support and cooperation to the new Special Representative, as we did with respect to his predecessor, Mr. Bernard Kouchner.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express its profound appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Kouchner. With his dynamic leadership and energetic efforts, Mr. Kouchner has successfully led UNMIK in dealing with the disastrous consequences of the recent war and the ethnic repression and cleansing that preceded it. He has turned those enormous challenges into new possibilities, thereby providing new hopes and aspirations for the people of Kosovo and building concrete foundations for their freedom and self-government within the framework of resolution 1244 (1999).

My delegation is gratified that in the first year and a half of its deployment, UNMIK has already made significant progress in the core areas of its mandate — providing humanitarian assistance in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the rebuilding and consolidation of sectoral facilities, the establishment of the provisional institutions for democratic and autonomous self-government and laying the foundation of long-term development and reconstruction for Kosovo.

The municipal elections of 20 October were a remarkable success and the culmination of continuous and strenuous efforts by UNMIK, in cooperation with

KFOR and with the strong and sustained support of the international community. We take note of the steps that have been taken to implement the outcome of the elections and to establish functioning municipal assemblies. We urge all the leaders and people of Kosovo to respect the outcome of the elections and to cooperate with UNMIK in consolidating this achievement. We are therefore concerned over the refusal by Kosovo's Serbs to participate in the elected assemblies in the municipalities of Mitrovica and Strepce, as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report.

Significantly, the strenuous efforts made by UNMIK to engage the local population in the establishment of substantial autonomy and self-governance in Kosovo have produced tangible results. The Joint Interim Administrative Structure is being further consolidated. The Mission is on the right path towards giving Kosovars greater responsibility for self-determination and self-governance, as well as the opportunity to have trust and confidence in the democratic process. We certainly look forward to UNMIK organizing Kosovo-wide general elections and note the careful planning and preparation under way for them to be held in the near future.

The precarious security situation in Kosovo remains a matter of serious concern to the international community and a major challenge to both UNMIK and the Kosovo Force. The continuation of violence, such as the incident that took place in the town of Leposavic last Sunday, is clearly unacceptable and should be condemned. Extremism, regardless of its source, should be rejected.

We fully support the continued efforts of the two missions to tackle the security problems in Kosovo effectively, as well as the efforts to contribute to normalizing the situation in the ground safety zone. Indeed, the tense situation in the ground safety zone is worrisome. The Council pronounced itself on this matter last Wednesday. At this critical juncture it is imperative that all concerned exercise maximum restraint, avoid any form of provocation and work constructively towards finding a peaceful solution.

In Kosovo the resolution of inter-community tensions is to a large extent linked to the overall issue of justice and to the issues relating to missing persons and the continued detention of Kosovars in Serbian jails. We therefore reaffirm our full support for the ongoing work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in Kosovo and for the efforts by UNMIK and Ambassador Henrik Amnéus to find an early solution to the twin problems of detainees and missing persons. In this regard we underline the importance of cooperation and concrete actions by all concerned. We look forward to the full cooperation of the new Government in Yugoslavia in resolving this issue once and for all.

Finally, the international community should view peace in Kosovo as a long-term process. The international community has come a long way in assisting the people of Kosovo to establish viable foundations for peace, democracy and self-government. The success of this enormous achievement and of the enormous investment by the international community will depend on continued strenuous efforts and vigilance on the part of the international community and on the cooperation of all the leaders and people of Kosovo. Their commitment is crucial to ensuring that the progress achieved thus far will not be reversed.

Mr. Cherif (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I would like first of all to welcome the presence here of His Excellency Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We listened with interest to his statement, and we believe it important to continue to make every effort to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council on Kosovo. I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hedi Annabi for his useful and informative briefing on the functioning of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

We think that with the success achieved by UNMIK during the 28 October elections — in particular the respect for electoral rules and procedures, the participation of such a great part of the population and the absence of violence during the vote — a significant hurdle has been overcome. This progress should be buttressed with a view to elaborating, with the agreement of all the parties to the conflict, a vision of the substantially autonomous regime foreseen in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). We believe that the new situation prevailing throughout the Balkans makes it possible to envisage the holding of constructive political dialogue on the future of Kosovo. The new disposition of the province should taken into consideration the rights of all the inhabitants to security, to have their differences

respected and to participate in public life. Further, this disposition should abolish hatred and attitudes based on ethnic considerations and should promote the peaceful coexistence of all the communities. In this context we think that the inhabitants of Kosovo should discuss the elaboration of a pact for Kosovo society.

I would like to express my delegation's concern about the fresh outbreak of acts of violence in Kosovo. These are the sort of acts that undermine the international community's efforts and their political nature seems designed to destabilize the region. These acts are unacceptable. In this regard we welcome the UNMIK initiative to create a group charged with examining the political violence, and we also welcome the efforts aimed at strengthening UNMIK's work in the security field, in particular its work to protect high-risk individuals.

Furthermore, we express our great concern regarding the heightened level of armed clashes in the Presevo Valley. This violence has already led to a flood of displaced persons in the interior of Kosovo and has contributed to making the situation more complex. We encourage the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK to persist in their efforts to restrict the activities of extremists. In this regard we subscribe to the idea that the presence of international organizations in and around the security zone can improve the situation and strengthen the confidence of the population. In addition, the Belgrade authorities' expressed willingness to find a solution to the problem of persons of Albanian extraction in southern Serbia and to promote the return of displaced persons, in particular by strengthening confidence measures, is encouraging.

The issue of detainees and people who have disappeared is particularly sensitive. It remains one of the principal sources inter-ethnic tension in Kosovo. We note with satisfaction that, following the designation of a Special Envoy on Persons Deprived of Liberty, an office charged with dealing with this issue has been created. In this regard we encourage all the parties to take appropriate steps to ensure the well-being and security of the detainees and to find a definitive solution to this issue.

The establishment of a reliable and impartial judicial system is essential for the re-establishment of peace in Kosovo. The impartial and non-discriminatory application of the laws will strengthen the confidence of the inhabitants of Kosovo in the rule of law — which alone can ensure the peaceful coexistence of all the ethnic communities. My delegation welcomes the progress achieved in this field and urges UNMIK to continue its efforts, in particular to implement the recommendations of the report on the criminal justice system in Kosovo.

The issue of refugees and displaced persons is crucial to the search for a lasting solution in Kosovo. It is important therefore to ensure that satisfactory conditions exist for the return of former inhabitants. In particular the security of minority communities should be strengthened. This issue is all the more vital because of the spontaneous nature of many returns. In this context we salute the laudable efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In conclusion, I would like to pay vigorous tribute to Mr. Bernard Kouchner, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo, and to thank him for his tireless efforts and for his commitment to the work of the international community. I also congratulate his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, and wish him complete success in his new role.

Mrs. Ashipala-Musavyi (Namibia): We too are happy to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Honourable Mr. Goran Svilanovic, to this meeting and to thank him warmly for his clear and informative statement. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Annabi and to thank him for his update on the latest developments.

My delegation welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to achieve peace, reconciliation and stability in the Balkan region. We believe that a peaceful democratic atmosphere will facilitate the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and also underscore the broad parameters in which regional problems can be addressed through peaceful political dialogue. We also recognize that a political dialogue cannot flourish amidst the threat by military elements of the Kosovo Liberation Army and of the so-called Liberation Army of Presevo. My delegation therefore concurs with the Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia that resolution 1244 (1999) should be implemented fully and that the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) take effective measures to put an end to the undesirable activities of the KLA and their like.

In our view, the Security Council should continue to show the same zeal and determination at a time when the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia is being challenged.

With respect to the municipal elections, we concur with the Secretary-General that the elections went well despite a few hiccups — among other things, voter processing at few polling centres and a lack of participation of some minorities. We therefore note with appreciation that during the period following the elections, Kosovo has experienced a significant drop in the level of politically motivated violence. However, as I mentioned earlier, the escalation of armed confrontation between the Serbian security forces and the so-called Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac in the ground safety zone not only poses a threat to those 5,000 displaced civilians in the Presevo Valley, but also stands to undermine the foundations of peace, reconciliation and stability in the region. Nonetheless, we are pleased to learn that 2,000 of the 5,000 persons who were internally displaced as a result of the latest fighting have returned to their homes in the area.

In this context, my delegation commends the joint security operations and other security-related activities conducted by UNMIK police and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) geared towards protecting civilians, including minority communities in Kosovo.

The precarious nature of the security situation in the Presevo Valley and its adjacent areas requires urgent attention from, and action by, the Security Council, and I think we heard this today from the Minister when he made his remarks. In view of the new political realities in the region, issues such as that of refugees and missing persons warrant that UNMIK and KFOR consult with the authorities in Belgrade in an attempt to find a proper balance in addressing these problems.

In conclusion, once again I acknowledge UNMIK, KFOR and other international humanitarian agencies for their ongoing work in Kosovo. Finally, we thank the Foreign Minister for his presence.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): To begin with, I should like to join previous speakers in welcoming the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Svilanovic, to this Chamber. Let me also thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing, and welcome the report of the Secretary-General.

Taking into account that on 16 November my delegation spoke at length on the recent activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), particularly on the results of the municipal elections that were held in Kosovo on 28 October, my comments will be brief and will touch only on a number of recent events in Kosovo.

One of last month's major developments was the swearing-in on 20 November of the United Nations-appointed members of the municipal assemblies in the three predominantly Serb municipalities in which the results of the October elections could not be certified because of inadequate voter turnout. We support these acts by the Special Representative and note his public assertion that these are temporary measures. My delegation favours the Special Representative's intention to hold by-elections in these municipalities early next year to replace the appointed municipal authorities.

As regards the Mission's efforts to create mechanisms for ensuring respect for human rights, in our view the establishment on 21 November of the ombudsperson institution deserves special mention. That institution is an independent body designed to investigate and mediate complaints from individuals, groups and organizations regarding human rights violations.

In the area of the development of the rule of law, my country emphasizes the significance of the inauguration on 14 November of the Supreme Court of Kosovo. While we note the positive developments in Kosovo in the course of the last month, we cannot overlook the discouraging and even disturbing developments, in particular the upsurge of inter-ethnic, political and criminal violence in the province; insignificant returns by Kosovo Serb and national minorities; and the escalation of armed confrontation in the ground safety zone along the border between Serbia and Kosovo.

The latest acts of violence, which resulted in scores of deaths and injuries, testify to the fact that the security situation in and around Kosovo is far from being satisfactory. My delegation supported the statement by the President of the Security Council of 22 November and his statement to the press of 13 December in relation to these tragic events. A full

investigation into these violent and terrorist acts should be conducted effectively and their perpetrators brought to justice.

In this regard, my country appreciates all joint efforts undertaken by UNMIK and KFOR police to combat this renewed cycle of violence. We support in particular their coordinated law-enforcement actions through the mechanism of the Political Violence Task Force and the joint security operations to combat trafficking in, and to confiscate, illegal weapons. We hope that the Ukrainian special police dog unit, which completed its deployment in Kosovo just a few days ago, will contribute to broadening the capacities of UNMIK police in undertaking special security measures. In our view, the new regulation by the head of UNMIK of 4 December, allowing law-enforcement officials to order unruly persons away from specific areas, will also be helpful in ensuring the security of the province.

In the context of the protection of minority communities, my delegation welcomes the establishment by UNMIK on 29 November of a joint committee on the return of Ashkalija Roma people, which will assist these displaced communities to come back to their homes or resettle in other locations under appropriate security conditions.

It is our belief that, in the run-up to the Serbian election of 23 December, UNMIK and KFOR will again take all necessary measures, as was the case during the Yugoslav September elections, to prevent any security threats that may emerge.

Let me make a few comments on the situation in the Presevo Valley, which was the central subject of the statement made today by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In our view, the dangerous events of the past few weeks in southern Serbia should be seen as a serious warning to the Security Council and to the international community of what we can expect in the immediate future in Kosovo and, on a broader scale, in Serbia, unless additional measures to eliminate the existing challenges to security are undertaken now.

We commend the efforts by KFOR that brokered the ceasefire agreement between the Serbian police and ethnic Albanian militants, and we acknowledge the prudence and restraint of the Yugoslav Government in this situation. In our view, the provocative actions of the ethnic Albanian fighters from the self-styled Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac, across the border between Kosovo and Serbia, are becoming increasingly defiant. This is made clear in the Secretary-General's report, which indicates that the military attacks against the Serbian police have increased in size, duration, sophistication and aggressiveness.

We condemn the latest attack on the joint Russia-United States KFOR patrol. In our view, these negative developments should stop immediately. In fact, the very existence of this armed group not only challenges stability in southern Serbia and Kosovo proper, but undermines all the strenuous efforts of the international community in pursuit of the very fragile peace process based on resolution 1244 (1999). It jeopardizes the prospects for the normalization of relations between the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, UNMIK and KFOR, and it threatens the democratic changes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and in the whole region.

Therefore, while praising KFOR efforts to ease the situation in the tense Kosovo border area, we encourage it and UNMIK to continue to take all possible robust measures to ensure adequate security for all inhabitants of Kosovo and to prevent any export of violence to southern Serbia.

My delegation welcomes the public statement made by the Secretary-General on 29 November. We are absolutely confident that the Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac, which acts almost openly in the uncontrolled ground safety zone, should be disarmed and disbanded as soon as possible. For these purposes, we believe that a closer dialogue between UNMIK and KFOR, on the one side, and the Yugoslav Government, on the other, is highly needed.

We took note of the appointment by the Secretary-General of his new Special Representative and head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Mr. Hans Haekkerup. We wish him every success in meeting the challenges of the leadership of one of the most complicated and truly unprecedented missions in United Nations history. My delegation would also like to pay a tribute to the efforts of the outgoing Special Representative, Mr. Bernard Kouchner.

Finally, we support the content of the draft presidential statement to be adopted today.

Mr. Toure (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I should like, in my turn, to thank the Secretary-General for his report and Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his very instructive briefing.

I also welcome Mr. Svilanovic, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to our meeting.

At the open meeting of 16 November, we welcomed the successful holding of elections on 28 October in Kosovo and the high level of participation in them, which did honour to the Kosovars, first and foremost, and to the entire international community, which did its utmost to ensure that the elections were held in a peaceful environment.

My delegation supports the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in its efforts to expand the membership of the Kosovo Transitional Council, taking into account the political, religious and ethnic diversity of the province. We also welcome the progress made in the establishment of municipal assemblies. We extend our support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with respect to his appointment of representatives of minority communities to elected assemblies in areas where they live.

We note with satisfaction that UNMIK is pursuing its consideration of reform of the existing central organs in the context of its efforts to ensure the establishment of institutions to promote increased self-government. The first regulations will soon be drafted.

With respect to security, we must acknowledge that, in the ground safety zone in southern Serbia, armed clashes intensified in mid-November between the Serbian security forces and the so-called Liberation Army of Presevo, Medveda and Bujanovac. My delegation remains deeply concerned by the situation in the Presevo Valley, where Albanian separatists are at work. We condemn the acts of violence perpetrated by these armed groups and call for the cessation of all violence in that area. Such acts are intolerable to us, given their potential to destabilize the entire area and to negate the sacrifices made by the international community to ensure a democratic, multi-ethnic Kosovo. We urge those armed groups to comply with the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999) and the Military-Technical Agreement. We also encourage UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to pursue their efforts to halt the illegal activities of the armed groups, not only in Kosovo but throughout the ground safety zone.

We welcome the dismantling of barriers raised by Serb demonstrators protesting against activities of Albanian-speaking separatists in Serbia. This will help to ease tensions and to optimize opportunities for negotiation. We regret that minorities have been the targets of threats, acts of intimidation and violence in Kosovo. In this respect, we support the special security measures undertaken by UNMIK and KFOR to suppress such illegal activity.

With respect to the law, my delegation welcomes the efforts made by UNMIK and its Department of Justice to establish a dependable judiciary and to ensure the rule of law. We are concerned for the fate of Kosovar detainees in Serb prisons and by the disappearance of individuals. A solution must urgently be found to this grievous problem.

At the humanitarian level, we endorse the policy of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to protect minorities. Particular attention must be paid to vulnerable groups.

My country gives its unreserved support to the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and believes that the essential issue of the status of the province must be resolved through cooperation and negotiation.

In conclusion, we pay a tribute to Mr. Bernard Kouchner, the outgoing head of UNMIK, for the work he has done in Kosovo. I offer his successor, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, the full support of my delegation.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Canada, I wish to commend the appointment of Mr. Hans Haekkerup as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo. Mr. Kouchner has established a solid basis for the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We have no doubt that Mr. Haekkerup will make excellent use of this very important legacy and will continue to lead Kosovo towards greater democracy, security and prosperity.

(*spoke in English*)

We also thank Mr. Annabi for his traditional good briefing on this issue and on others. We welcome the presence of Foreign Minister Svilanovic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and have taken careful note of the points he made to us in his statement.

With respect to the situation in the Presevo Valley, Canada remains deeply concerned by the potentially destabilizing impact of violence by a marginal group of armed extremists. We fully support the presidential statement to be issued today on this subject. We also support the efforts made to date by the international community to reduce tensions, for example through the more stringent control by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) of the administrative boundary between Kosovo and Serbia, including the efforts made to block the transit of recruits, supplies and weapons into the Presevo Valley. We also condemn the recent attack on the KFOR joint patrol and, more generally, all violence in the area. We hope KFOR's resolve will help to reduce that violence.

The ongoing political dialogue between UNMIK and Yugoslav and Serbian authorities is crucial, both for the issues involved in the Presevo Valley and for other issues affecting Kosovo, such as the problem of detained Kosovar Albanians in Serbian jails. Canada appreciates the work done by international organizations, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in the Presevo Valley, which has assisted the return of refugees to the region. The presence of international observers has had an important stabilizing effect.

We also applaud the moderate reaction of the Yugoslav and Serbian Governments to the acts of violence in southern Serbia. Yugoslav army and Serbian police units have respected the terms of the Military-Technical Agreement and avoided any escalation of violence. We encourage Yugoslavia to continue its cooperation with the international community and urge the Kosovar Albanian leadership to do its part to prevent the support of armed groups.

Once the 23 December elections in Serbia are completed, the international community should examine the options for greater cooperation for security in the Presevo Valley. With the constructive engagement of a democratic Government in Belgrade, of moderate Albanian leaders and of the international community, we can all at last look forward with some optimism to the future.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

I wish at the outset to welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Mr. Goran Svilanovic, and to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2000/1196). My thanks go also to Mr. Annabi for his presentation of that report.

The change in the leadership of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to take place in January 2001 provides a good opportunity for an impartial assessment of the Mission's achievements and shortcomings, and to identify ways and means to rectify the errors permitted by the previous head of UNMIK. The Mission's principal activities involve consistent implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) in its entirety; it must permit no modification of those endeavours, no matter what the pretext.

It is no secret that, as in the past, that Security Council resolution is being implemented partially and unsatisfactorily, despite the efforts being made by the international presences. In that connection, we view it as essential that the Security Council and the Secretary-General ensure tighter control over the activities of UNMIK. The situation is absolutely intolerable; the plans of the head of UNMIK, including on matters of principle, were often made known to the Security Council, its members and the United Nations at large only through the mass media.

It is imperative immediately to establish constructive cooperation among UNMIK, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the Yugoslav authorities on all matters connected with the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Here, I am speaking, *inter alia*, of settling the question of the status of the international presences through the signing of corresponding agreements with Belgrade, ensuring conditions for the return to the region of refugees and displaced persons, and preparing a timetable and conditions for the return to Kosovo of Yugoslav military and Serbian police personnel. Finally, we need at least the start of a political process that will lead in the foreseeable future to a comprehensive settlement of the Kosovo problem.

It is inadmissible that the formula for the future political status of Kosovo should be determined by some self-anointed task force headed by UNMIK, which has no Security Council mandate whatsoever for such an activity. Despite our repeated requests, the Security Council remains unaware of what the task force is doing. The new head of UNMIK, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, whom we wish success and good luck, should take a lesson from the unfortunate history of his

predecessor — when UNMIK connived with the separatist sentiments of the leaders of the Kosovo Albanians. Only the balanced and principled position of the international presences can halt the unremitting wave of extremism and separatism, both in Kosovo and in other parts of Serbia, including the Presevo Valley.

We consider that the head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, in close cooperation with KFOR, should enact measures for the true completion of the process of demilitarizing the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), rather than its completion merely on paper; these should make it impossible for post-KLA structures to actively influence the political situation and should prevent the illegal flow of weapons to those structures. Such measures by UNMIK and KFOR would be a key precondition for ensuring the safety of minorities in Kosovo and for creating the necessary conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons.

Only after such a process of return becomes irreversible will it be possible, with the direct involvement of Belgrade, to formulate the parameters of Kosovo's autonomy within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Then it will be possible to address the question of preparing for general elections. We are convinced that the Security Council should decide on the time frame for such elections taking thorough account of all those factors.

To force general elections at an earlier date — which the outgoing head of the Mission was attempting to do — would only strengthen the mono-ethnic character of Kosovo, stir up nationalist feelings in heavily Albanian areas in southern Serbia and exacerbate the crisis in the ground safety zone of the Presevo Valley. All of this poses the threat of a fresh upsurge of tension in the Balkans. It is a matter of urgent necessity now to eliminate the consequences of the provocative actions of Albanian extremists in the ground safety zone, and to prevent their resumption, as called for in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 22 November 2000 (S/PRST/2000/35).

KFOR has taken concrete steps to thwart provocative attacks by Albanian fighters in the region, but that is clearly not enough. I recall the declaration issued by the governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbia on principles for the defence of the Government and the national interests of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in connection with the escalation of Albanian terrorism in Kosovo and in the ground safety zone. We should thoroughly consider the measures for the urgent withdrawal, detention and disarmament of Albanian terrorists operating with impunity in the ground safety zone.

UNMIK and KFOR should ensure that the work of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia committee on questions relating to Kosovo and Metohija can be carried out in safety and without interference. Conditions should be created that will be favourable to the holding in Kosovo of the 23 December elections to the Serbian parliament. We hope that, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General, UNMIK and KFOR will take the measures necessary to ensure security with a view to thwarting the attempts of Kosovo Albanian extremists to use those elections to destabilize the situation in the region.

Nor can we fail to be concerned at certain reports and at statements by some Kosovo Albanian leaders who are considered to be moderate. Here, I am thinking, inter alia, of the interview given by Ibrahim Rugova to the weekly *Der Spiegel*, in which he said that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is already acting as a "private army of the Albanians" in Kosovo. And as for UNMIK, Mr. Rugova said that the Mission would be able, for a long time to come,

> "to remain in the region to provide assistance during the transition to independence, but with a reduction in personnel".

It is obvious that such statements contradict the decisions of the international community and should meet with a proper response from the international presences.

The Security Council should promote the speedy conclusion of the process of reintegrating the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a full-fledged member of the world community. That would constitute real support for the efforts of the new leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to bring about democracy and reform in Yugoslav society on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and of respect for the rights of all the peoples that live there, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

The statement by the President of the Security Council, which we expect to issue shortly, should be a concrete step towards resolving these issues.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

There are no further speakers on the list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.